

Social Security Program

The Social Security program—Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI)—provides monthly benefits to workers and their families when earnings stop or are reduced because the worker retires, dies, or becomes disabled. The amount of the worker's retirement insurance (old-age) or disability benefit is based on the worker's level of earnings in employment or self-employment covered by the Social Security program. The benefit amount for an auxiliary or survivor beneficiary is based on a percentage of the worker's benefit. Monthly benefits are payable to retired workers at age 65 (reduced benefits at 62) or to disabled workers at any age. Auxiliary and survivor beneficiaries must generally meet an age, a disability, or child care requirement.

Nationally, in December 2001 benefits were paid to 45,874,040 persons. This number included 28,841,850 retired workers, 5,024,520 widows and widowers, 5,265,190 disabled workers, 2,895,150 wives and husbands, and 3,847,330 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented 15.7 percent of the total population and 91.2 percent of the population 65 or older.

Monthly benefits averaged \$874 for retired workers; \$820 for all widows and widowers (\$841 for nondisabled widows and widowers); \$815 for disabled workers; and \$430 for wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers. Average payments for children of deceased workers were \$570; for children of retired workers, \$414; and for children of disabled workers, \$239.

Monthly payments for December 2001 totaled \$36.5 billion. Of this amount, \$26.6 billion was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$5.2 billion to survivors; and \$4.7 billion to disabled workers and their dependents. Average benefits and total monthly payments include the 2.6 percent cost-of-living increase effective December 2001.

In the **Virgin Islands**, benefits were paid to 14,020 persons. This number included 8,850 retired workers; 1,170 widows and widowers; 1,230 disabled workers; 1,020 wives and husbands; and 1,750 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented . percent of the total population of the state and . percent of the state's population aged 65 or older.

Retired workers in the Virgin Islands received an average of \$739 per month; widows and widowers, \$630; disabled workers, \$806; and wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers, \$357. Average payments for children were: \$336 for children of retired workers; \$440 for children of deceased workers; and \$256 for children of disabled workers.

Monthly payments in December 2001 totaled \$9 million. Of this amount, \$7 million was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$1 million to survivors; and \$1 million to disabled workers and their dependents.

Social Security Earnings and Employment

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 151.4 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Social Security (Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance or OASDI) program. They earned \$3.7 trillion in Social Security taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$464 billion in Social Security taxes to the OASI and DI Trust Funds.

For 1999, earnings and employment data for the **Virgin Islands** is not available.

Medicare Earnings and Employment

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 154.7 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Medicare (Hospital Insurance or HI) program. They earned \$4.6 trillion in

Medicare taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$134 billion in Medicare taxes to the HI Trust Fund.

For 1999, earnings and employment data for the **Virgin Islands** is not available.



Angela Y. Harper was responsible for the programming, processing and compiling of data. For additional information pertaining to data in the factsheet, please contact Rona Blumenthal (410-965-0163) for Social Security data; Arthur Kahn for SSI program data (410-965-0186); and for information about earnings and employment, Greg Diez (410-965-0153). For technical information about the data processing, contact Angela Y. Harper (410-965-0106). For additional copies, contact the Division of Information Resources (202-358-6274) or check SSA's web site: <http://www.ssa.gov/policy>.

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